

2015/6/5: The federal armed forces of the German Federation

The federal armed forces of the German Federation as a consequence of the Viennese Congress of 1815 – an attempt at establishing a joint army for guaranteeing peace

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The Viennese Congress ended a phase of war with a civilized peace treaty, which in essence secured the European continental order until beyond the century, thus giving stability. The Congress was based on the principle of legitimacy and could be applied for all participants, thus enabling the defeated to have perspectives at the beginning of the negotiations already. The military constitution of the German Federation imposed symmetry of armed forces structure on its states which did not yet factor in the developments of industrial mass production, and which demanded a personnel and material minimum size from the sovereign member states. More or less undesignedly, the peace agreement of 1815 had put the Prussian Kingdom into a „double front situation“, which induced the military command to plan strategically, thus causing the establishment of war schools and war strategies. The new defence efforts against France, for instance, resulted in including technology, thus in building railways as means of transport. The required building measures enforced the coordination of the military and the civil building authorities, as well as planning the respective financial backup. For this reason, the military side had to accept a certain dependency on civil licensing procedures. Thus, „making war“ was not an exclusively military or sovereign „business“; on the contrary, it became state matter. These consequences for the armed forces of the German Federation as well as the manner of coordination in the military commission demonstrate certain parallelisms with the present goals of the European Security and Defence Policy. These goals are, among other things, to give the European Union the capability of action by establishing joint military forces for enforcing its European Security and Defence Policy. In the course of laborious negotiations, lasting decisions were made in the European Union, in Cologne (June 1999), in Helsinki (December 1999), and in Nice (December 2000), for establishing European „crises reaction forces“, thus complying with the Maastricht Union Treaty of 2nd February 1992. There, issues were to be discussed which resembled those in the federal records of the German Federation, the military part of which were implemented in the Federal War Constitution of the German Federation. From this point of view, the analysis of the complexity of the federal armed forces of the German Federation appears to keep its topicality. Due to the present-day challenges in a conflict-stricken world with its not always controllable governmental or non-governmental organisations, the security-political methods of resolution of the Viennese Congress after the break-up of the „Heiligen Römischen Reiches Deutscher Nation“ in 1806, or after the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1989, appear worthy of remembrance.